

**In the claims:**

Please amend claims 1-7, 20, 21, 23, 24, 35, 36, 37, and 38 as follows:

B1  
1. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or a complement thereof.

2. (Amended) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1, wherein said nucleic acid molecule encodes an SES polypeptide involved in the production of a fine chemical.

3. (Amended) An isolated *Corynebacterium glutamicum* nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof.

4. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:14, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:22, or SEQ ID NO:24.

5. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes a naturally occurring allelic variant of a *Corynebacterium glutamicum* polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:14, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:22, or SEQ ID NO:24, wherein the nucleic acid molecule hybridizes to the complement of a nucleic acid molecule consisting of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23 in 6X SSC at 45°C, followed by one or more washes in 0.2X SSC, 0.1% SDS at 50-65°C.

6. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which has at least 50% identity with the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof.

B1  
7. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a fragment of at least 15 nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof.

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B2  
20. (Amended) An isolated polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:14, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:22, or SEQ ID NO:24.

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21. (Amended) An isolated polypeptide comprising a naturally occurring allelic variant of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:14, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:22, or SEQ ID NO:24.

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B3  
23. (Amended) An isolated polypeptide which is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which has at least 50% identity with the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof.

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24. (Amended) An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence which has at least 50% identity with the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:6, SEQ ID NO:12, SEQ ID NO:14, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:22, or SEQ ID NO:24.

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B4  
35. (Amended) A method for diagnosing the presence or activity of *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* in a subject, comprising detecting the presence of one or more of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof in the subject, thereby diagnosing the presence or activity of *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* in the subject.

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36. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is disrupted.

37. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof, wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises one or more nucleic acid modifications.

38. (Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO:1, SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:5, SEQ ID NO:11, SEQ ID NO:13, SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:21, or SEQ ID NO:23, or the complement thereof, wherein the regulatory region of the nucleic acid molecule is modified relative to the wild-type regulatory region of the molecule.

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